GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:423
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2007
FM RADIO STATION
Gangwar Shri Santosh Kumar

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the licence holders of private FM Radio are broadcasting news programme in violation of the guidelines issued for them;

(b) if so, the details during each of the last three years till date, broadcaster-wise and State and Union Territory-wise;

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether the Government proposes to permit them to broadcast news by way of making changes in the FM Radio licence policy;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government proposes to set up any agency to monitor the broadcast on FM Radio; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R.DASMUNSI)

(a) to (c) A report from Prasar Bharati was received on 6.10.2006 intimating this Ministry that certain private FM channels were indulging in news dissemination. The matter was then got examined and after verification of the CD recordings of the programme of two channels viz. M/s Entertainment Network India Limited (Radio Mirchi) and M/s Radio Mid-Day(West) India Limited (Radio One), where specific complaint was brought to the notice of the Ministry, it was found that above two channels had been broadcasting news and current affairs programme directly or indirectly. Both the companies have been given a warning and advised to abstain from broadcasting News & Current Affair programmes. A Press note was also issued on 31.08.2007 advising all private FM broadcasters to refrain from any activities which are in violation of the terms and conditions of FM licence, drawing attention to specific clause relating to prohibition of broadcasting news and current affairs. No other specific complaint has, however, been received in this regard during the last 3 years.

(d) & (e) No such decision has been taken to permit the broadcast of news through changes in the FM Radio Policy.

(f) & (g) At present, Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Limited (BECIL), an autonomous corporation under this Ministry has been entrusted with the job of monitoring the broadcast on FM Radio. Apart from above, the Draft Broadcasting Bill, 2007, presently under consultation with stakeholders, among other things, proposes to set up a Broadcasting Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI) which would regulate radio Broadcasting services also.